

WATER/WASTEWATER FACILITIES COMMISSION
COMMISSION MINUTES
May 6, 2015

A meeting of the City of Fitchburg Water / Wastewater Commission was held on May 6, 2015 at the JA Provincial Building, 1200 Rindge Rd, Fitchburg, MA.

The meeting commenced at 4:45 P.M.

Members present: Lenny Laakso, Commissioner DPW
 Rick Healey
 Michael McLaughlin
 George Siener
 Carol Brown

Members Absent: Ron Lubianez

Others present: Jeff Murawski, Deputy Commissioner Wastewater
 John Deline, Deputy Commissioner of Water
 Mary Jane Franklin

ITEM # 1: Approval of last meetings minutes:

The minutes for the April 8, 2015 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

ITEM # 2: Public forum:

No public forum comments were received.

ITEM # 3: FY2016 budget:

Mr. Deline reported he expected no significant changes for the Water Department budget in FY16. He would like to increase the distribution staff (distribution is understaffed currently) to facilitate projects being done in house. \$922,000 is available in retained earnings and although \$160,000 has been planned to balance the budget, he hopes to only have to use \$110,000 to \$120,000. Mr. Deline talked about capital projects that he has budgeted for. (See item # 6) The motion to recommend the approval of the budget to the Mayor was made by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. Siener. It was approved by unanimous vote.

ITEM # 4: Water rate study update:

Mr. Deline explained Tighe & Bond needs additional information to complete the rate study that the billing software, MUNIS, may not be able to provide. They will continue to work on this and Mr. Deline hopes to have a draft by the next meeting.

ITEM # 5: Water Street – water main break:

Mr. Deline met with Tighe & Bond, the on call contractor believes the cost to replace the two pipes under the bridge will be approximately \$250,000. Weston & Sampson will be able to give an estimate next week. Mr. Deline will also look at the possibility of having the pipes lined which will increase the integrity of the structure.

ITEM # 6: Anticipated projects for 2016 construction season:

Mr. Deline discussed the need to replace the roof at the Narrows Road pressure reducing station and repair and rehab the Meetinghouse Gate House. He stated DEP would also like to see these improvements made.

Mr. Deline explained the Burbank Hospital chlorination building, which has a large main going from Scott Road to Burbank will need to be demolished. The pipe is showing signs of deterioration and has no valves. Mr. Deline is concerned that if there were a failure with this main the consequences would be catastrophic and many people would be without water. He would like to install an insertion valve at a hydrant in order to bypass the building, repair the main and then demolish the building.

ITEM # 7: Brief update on sewer infrastructure damage in the Nashua River (near First Street and Railroad Street):

Mr. Murawski gave a brief synopsis of the damaged manhole located in the Nashua River.

Wright Pierce has provided a multi task proposal, one of which is for the river manholes. Because the river manholes are a high priority, Mr. Murawski solicited a second proposal from one of the on call engineers, Weston & Sampson and he is reviewing both proposals. (See item #8)

ITEM # 8: Discuss approach and funding for:

- **Hazel Street and Beech Street areas and the remaining three river sewer manholes**

The Hazel Street and Beech Street areas along with the remaining three manholes are included in the multi task proposal from Wright Pierce. He plans to do the design, engineering and bidding within this calendar year. This project will be funded within the FY-15 budget with approval from City Council and the Finance Committee. Hazel Street is upstream of the CSO regulator that can't be closed. The Hazel Street and Beech Street areas are geographically close to one another, and as a result will be merged into a single construction project.

- **Combination Manholes Separation:**

Requirements of both the NPDES permit and the Consent Decree (the Consent Decree incorporates by reference the NPDES Permit) concern provisions of combination manholes. If a combination manhole shows evidence of transference of flow, from one side to the other, it needs to be separated within two years.

There are approximately 75 manholes that need to be separated. Excluding design, engineering and bidding, which is approximately \$250,000, it is estimated to be about

\$600,000 to separate the manholes. There will be a line item earmarked for combination manhole separation in the FY-16 budget. Part of Wright Pierce's proposal will be an engineering services contract dedicated for developing a combination manholes separation contract for bidding and construction.

Mr. Murawski stated one possibility for handling this issue would be to work with contractors to complete a drainage project in lieu of an I/I fee payment.

ITEM# 9: Updated DRAFT FY 16 Budget:

Mr. Murawski reported that Capital expenditures have increased due to an additional line item associated with Combination Manholes. Operating expenses were down slightly due to a decrease in electricity associated with no longer incinerating. There has been no significant change in chemicals although with the wet weather (and no considerable history to go on) he had to make slight adjustments.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the justification for personnel and the pay rates.

The motion to recommend the approval of the budget to the Mayor was made by Mr. Laakso and seconded by Mr. Siener. It was approved by unanimous vote.

ITEM 10: Projecting revenues:

Mr. Murawski reported the second and third quarters of paper mill billing have been mailed along with memorandums for the fourth quarter. The due dates will be staggered to capture the revenues before the end of the fiscal year. Capital expenditure bill will be sent out within a week requiring payment before June.

ITEM # 11: SSU Project:

- **Update on East WWTF Secondary Systems Upgrade Contract:**

Mr. Murawski reported the study by Wright Pierce is advancing regarding the letter of map provision associated with the 100 year flood at the East Plant. CDM Smith was chosen to be the OPM for the SSU project and a scope negotiation is taking place.

- **Update on Construction Phase Engineering Services RFP Status:**

Mr. Murawski reminded the Commission that that because of some sub trades this should have been a Chapter 149 project and Wright Pierce's contract prohibits Chapter 149 work. The required requisition was submitted to the Purchasing Department for a contract amendment, however, now it appears Purchasing would like to get guidance from the Attorney General's office on how to proceed.

ITEM # 12: CSS-4D Project:

The John Fitch project is moving forward and restoration is expected to be done in the summer.

ITEM # 14: West Plant Anaerobic Digestion, draft feasibility report, and “next steps”:

The draft feasibility report will be available to the public and various Commissions and Boards very soon.

Mr. Murawski reminded the Commission that once the landfill closes – in approximately 10 years – it will be very costly for Fitchburg to dispose of its sludge. Anaerobic digestion has potential to be a cost effective way to do this.

Mr. Murawski discussed different procurement processes such as design, bid, build and be City run and financed or it could be a privatized operation, design build operate, which would minimize risks for the city.

ITEM # 15: Other Business:

Mr. Deline announced there will likely be a water ban in place soon.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2015 at 4:30 P.M. at the JA Provincial Building, 1200 Rindge Rd., Fitchburg, MA.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 P.M.

Minutes Prepared by _____
Mary Jane Franklin